

EDITOR & PUBLISHER
1 MAY 1976

CIA doubletalk

In February, CIA Director George Bush issued a statement saying: "Effective immediately, the CIA will not enter into any paid or contractual relationship with any full-time or part-time news correspondent accredited by any U.S. news service, newspaper, periodical, radio or television network or station." E&P (Feb. 21, page 6) applauded the statement as did many publications.

Mr. Bush repeated that statement last week in response to a question before the annual meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors in Washington.

Now the report of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence Activities discloses that "of the approximately 50 U.S. journalists or personnel of U.S. media organizations who were employed by the CIA or maintained some other covert relationship with it at the time of the announcement, fewer than one-half will be terminated under the new CIA guidelines."

The committee says the key word is "accredited" and the agency interprets it as applying to those who are "formally authorized by contract or issuance of press credentials to represent themselves as correspondents" leaving all others (executives and free lancers) as not included.

This is CIA doubletalk.

The damage to the integrity of all responsible news people continues with this sham.

Mr. Bush should immediately clarify the CIA position by saying "all news people" are included in the prohibition, not just some.